

Grace

INTRODUCTION

1) What is grace?

Some answers:

- a) undeserved forgiveness
- b) an "in-spite-of" kind of love
- c) acceptance even without perfect performance
- d) real love

(Give some examples and analogies from your own life)

2) Where does grace come from?

a) A Christian receives the substitution of Jesus' righteousness for their sinfulness

2 Corinthians 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

b) After baptism, the blood of Jesus covers over my sins, allowing me to be justified: "just-as -if-I'd-never-sinned"

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Input = Our Part		Output = God's View
Sin	G	Forgiveness
Imperfection	R	
	A	Perfection
	C	
Filthy Heart	E	A Sinless Heart

Bottom line : Grace is almost too good to be true, but it is!

The goal of this study is to help you to see the real God who loves you and how valuable you are to him. He valued you at the cost of his only son, whom he gave up so that there could be grace to forgive your sins and restore your relationship with him.

1. Psalm 103:8-10

8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

9 He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

What are some sins in your life? What do you deserve for them?

- a) Punishment (grounding, removal of privileges, jail, etc/.)
- b) not being trusted by people

Bottom line : God sees everything that we do and think, and he knows what we deserve yet, it is his grace that gives us forgiveness rather than punishment.

2. Romans 8:1-2

1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

What does "no condemnation" mean?

- a) no punishment
- b) not feeling "in the doghouse"
- c) not feeling like God others are looking down on you

Bottom line : We can never earn grace. Grace comes through Jesus' sacrifice for our sins and frees us from the condemnation that we deserve because of our sins.

3. 1 Corinthians 15:9-11

9 For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

11 Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

What is Paul because of grace?

- a) a forgiven man
- b) a Christian

What effect did God's grace have on Paul?

- a) he worked hard for God
- b) He lived his whole life. For Christ (philippians 1:21)
- c) He was a very grateful man.

Bottom line : grace completely changes our lives.

PERSONAL HEART CHECK QUESTIONS

- a. What should God's grace produce in you? Does it?
- b. How should you respond to God's grace? Will you?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

a. Decide that you will live for God because of his grace and not to earn his grace. Write a one-page letter to God because of his grace and not to earn his grace.

b. Write a one- page letter to God expressing you understanding of his grace (using a personal example from your life) and your gratitude for his grace.

c. Write a one-page essay describing the areas that you need to grow in and what you will initiate to see them change.

To the leaders of the study

The understanding of grace is the foundation for a love-motivated relationship with God, rather than one that is works-motivated. Often teens raised in the church can be little Pharisees the making, knowing the requirements of the Christian life, but missing the heart motivation. Similarly, Overachievers (in the world or in the kingdom) are valued by others and values themselves based on their performance.

The goal of this study is to build security, self-esteem and worth based on God's forgiving love and not on their Christian duty or perfect performance. Your personal examples and analogies will make the difference in their understanding of a potentially broad and complex concept.